



Promoting Excellence for All

2005 NEW JERSEY ESL PROGRAM SURVEY REPORT

**New Jersey Commission on Higher Education
May 2006**

Introduction

The State of New Jersey continues to grow as a home for thousands of immigrants from around the world. The number of foreign-born persons increased 25 percent in New Jersey from 967,000 in 1990 to 1,208,000 in 2000.¹ According to the U.S. Census Bureau in 2004, only two states, New York and California, have a greater percentage of foreign-born persons than New Jersey.

Data from the 2004 census also indicated that New Jersey ranks 5th in the percentage of population age 5 and older who speak a language at home other than English. The five counties with the highest percentage of non-native speakers between the ages of 18 to 64 who speak English not well or not at all are Hudson (21.2%), Union (11.8%), Passaic (9.5%), Essex (8.8%), and Atlantic (7.5%). See Appendix 1. According to the New Jersey Department of Education, there were 274,027 language minority students for the 2004-2005 school year. Of these students, 61,287 are classified as limited English proficient (LEP).

In fall 2005, the Commission sent a survey to all senior public institutions, community colleges, and independent institutions in the state. The survey instrument is attached as Appendix 2. Of the 47 campuses surveyed 42 responded for an overall response rate of 89.4 percent. (The three campuses of Rutgers, The State University--Camden, Newark, and New Brunswick--are counted separately.) The sector response rate was as follows:

- 100% of the state colleges/universities (9 of 9)
- 71% of the independent colleges (10 of 14)
- 100% of the community colleges (19 of 19)
- 80% of the public research universities (4 of 5)

This report of the ESL survey results will present information reported by New Jersey institutions. The Commission has collected this data since fall 1994 to ensure that trends in postsecondary ESL education are being monitored and shared.

Fall 2005 ESL Student Enrollment

Of the 42 campuses responding to the survey, over 78 percent (33 institutions) have an active ESL program. The majority of programs (19 or 57.5 percent) are part of the English or Foreign Language departments. Similar to previous surveys, community colleges continue to serve the greatest number of ESL students, almost 91 percent. The state colleges/universities and public research universities enroll 6.8 percent of the students. Institutions in the independent sector enroll 2.6 percent of the ESL population.

Northern New Jersey institutions still serve the largest portion of students (over 48 percent) but the figure is lower than the previous survey (66 percent). The percentage of ESL students enrolled at institutions located in the central part of the state has increased to almost 40 percent compared to the previous figure of 20.8 percent. The percentage for the southern New Jersey institutions, 12.2 percent, is consistent with the previous survey, 12.8 percent.

¹ New Jersey Department of Labor, Division of Labor Market & Demographic Research, Estimates of Foreign-born Population in New Jersey: 2000

In fall 2005, 14,064 students were enrolled in ESL programs; a decrease of approximately 12 percent since the previous survey conducted in fall 2003 (15,860 students). Since Commission staff have been collecting data, the overall number of ESL students at New Jersey colleges and universities has increased by 54 percent, from 9,113 students in fall 1994 to 14,064 in fall 2005. See Appendix 3 for student enrollments by institution.

Fall 2005
Distribution and Enrollments by Institutional Sector

Sector	Number of institutions serving ESL students	Number of students served	Percentage of enrolled ESL students served by this sector
Community colleges	18	12,752	90.7
State colleges/universities	7	824	5.8
Research universities	2	129	0.9
Independent colleges and universities	6	359	2.6
TOTAL	33	14,064	100.0

The total number of ESL undergraduate students reported was 11,381. Of this number, almost 52 percent were enrolled as full-time students which is a slight decrease from the 2003 survey results (56 percent). The program with the largest number of undergraduate students is Passaic County Community College (1,965), followed by community colleges at Union (1,740), Middlesex (1,122), Hudson (1,100), and Camden (1,069).

The table below summarizes the undergraduate enrollment by institution type for those programs that reported serving of students in the fall of 2005.

Fall 2005
Program Enrollment by Institution Type

	<50	51-100	101-200	201-300	301-400	401-500	501-999	>1000	TOTAL
Community colleges	2	1	3	1	1	1	3	6	18
State colleges/universities	2	1	2	2	-	-	-	-	7
Public research universities	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Independent colleges and universities	4	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	6
TOTAL	9	4	5	4	1	1	3	6	33

Respondents reported information on the educational background for 85 percent of the students they serve. For the undergraduate students, 14 percent had earned college credit elsewhere before enrolling in their current institution, over 64 percent had earned a high school diploma, and 4.5 percent of the ESL students possessed a GED or had completed less than high school.

ESL Assessment Tools and Instruction

ESL programs at New Jersey colleges and universities employ a variety of assessment instruments for placing students in courses. The majority of programs use a combination of standardized tests, both commercial (e.g., Accuplacer, CELT, and COMPASS) and in-house instruments as well as oral interviews and essay tests. The number of institutions using Accuplacer has increased; one-third of the respondents use this instrument. A summary of the responses from the institutions is included as Appendix 4.

The survey respondents also reported data about the personnel providing instruction for ESL students. Although the majority of ESL courses (credits taught) are provided by part-time and/or adjunct faculty (54.4%); this percentage has decreased notably from the previous survey (73.3%).

Linguistic Background

In 2005, ESL directors reported language backgrounds for over 55 percent of the enrolled students. ESL students enrolled in New Jersey's institutions for fall 2005 speak 88 different languages as compared with 51 languages reported in the 1994 survey. The tables below illustrate language backgrounds for student populations of 100 or more from the four most recent survey years.

1999 ESL Survey	
Language	Number of Students
Spanish	4,453
Chinese	599
Gujarati	599
Polish	568
Korean	565
Haitian/Creole	345
Arabic	316
Russian	292
Egyptian	290
Hindi	184
Portuguese	144
Turkish	137
Japanese	131
Vietnamese	121
Ukranian	104

2001 ESL Survey	
Language	Number of Students
Spanish	5,758
Arabic	597
Haitian/Creole	593
Polish	552
Chinese	536
Gujarati	440
Korean	412
Russian	355
Turkish	227
Portuguese	196
Hindi	149
Vietnamese	137
Japanese	135
French	127
Greek	121
Filipino	100

2003 ESL Survey	
Language	Number of Students
Spanish	4,142
Haitian/Creole	534
Polish	517
Arabic	438
Korean	369
Gujarati	313
Chinese	271
Russian	223
Portuguese	218
Turkish	197
French	186
Hindi	163
Ukranian	121

2005 ESL Survey	
Language	Number of Students
Spanish	2,899
Haitian/Creole	383
Arabic	351
Polish	306
Portuguese	243
Chinese	202
Gujarathi	132
Korean	131
Russian	113
Turkish	112

Demand

Of the institutions that responded to the survey, the majority (51.5%) expect the demand for ESL courses to remain even. Ten institutions (30.3%) expect the demand to steadily increase while two institutions (6.1%) anticipate steadily decreasing demand. Four of the institutions (12.1%) could not discern any trend or did not respond to the question. Almost 82 percent of the institutions serving ESL students believe that their institutions offer sufficient classes to meet current demand.

The survey also included a question about the services available for ESL students. For fall 2005, the top five services available to second language learners were bilingual financial aid counseling, bilingual academic advising, ESL computer/multimedia laboratories, and professional and peer tutoring services. The three services most desired by respondents were field trips for ESL students (38.5%), special summer program limited to ESL students (26.9%), and orientation to ESL program (26.9%). Two notable changes are the increase in availability of ESL peer tutoring services and bilingual personal counseling, formerly ranked 10th and 8th are now ranked 4th and 5th respectively. In addition, orientation to ESL program has dropped from 2nd to 8th in the ranking of available services.

The following table displays the range of services offered and the percentage of institutions providing these services to students for most recent two years surveyed.

	<u>FALL 2005</u> Percentage of institutions providing services (rank)	<u>FALL 2003</u> Percentage of institutions providing services (rank)
Financial aid counseling (bilingual)	95.5% (1)	88.9% (4)
Academic advising (bilingual)	92.0% (2)	94.7% (3)
ESL computer/multimedia lab	89.7% (3)	96.2% (1)
ESL professional tutoring	89.7% (3)	96.2% (1)
ESL peer tutoring	85.2% (4)	75.0% (10)
Personal counseling (bilingual)	85.0% (5)	77.3% (8)
Career counseling (bilingual)	78.3% (6)	87.5% (6)
Orientation to college specifically designed for ESL students	74.2% (7)	88.0% (5)
Orientation to ESL program	73.1% (8)	95.7% (2)
Language lab	72.0% (9)	81.8% (7)
Informal conversation groups	69.2% (10)	76.0% (9)
ESL clubs	68.0% (11)	63.6% (12)
Special summer program(s) limited to ESL students	65.4% (12)	63.2% (13)
Field trips for ESL students	61.5% (13)	72.0% (11)

Summary/Implications

As noted in previous reports, New Jersey's colleges and universities, especially its community colleges, continue to provide an important point of access to higher education for students whose primary language is not English. All the community colleges except one, indicated serving ESL students; these students account for 7.2 percent of the undergraduate community college enrollment for fall 2005. [Please note this percentage does not include continuing education students.]

With the trends in K-12 education and immigration, more ESL students will seek to obtain a college degree from New Jersey institutions. This expected demand and state's fiscal situation will continue to be a challenge for programs serving ESL students. The need to seek external funding is likely to increase and many institutions will turn to the Commission's Education of Language Minority Students (ELMS) Grant Program. The survey indicated that 88 percent of the respondents are familiar with the grant program. Of the respondents, two-thirds have applied for ELMS funding.

*For further information regarding this report or
the Education of Language Minority Students Grant Program,
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